DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 420 599 SO 028 827

AUTHOR Patrick, John J.
TITLE "E Pluribus Unum": What Does It Mean? How Should We Respond?
PUB DATE 1997-00-00
NOTE 25p.; Keynote address presented at the Annual Meeting of the Michigan Council for the Social Studies (Dearborn, MI, February 6, 1997).
PUB TYPE Opinion Papers (120) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Citizen Participation; Citizen Role; *Citizenship; *Citizenship Education; Citizenship Responsibility; *Civics

ABSTRACT

This keynote address examines the clashing viewpoints of unity and diversity on the meanings of "e pluribus unum." The continuing debate can be cataloged and clarified by three "ideal-type" models of conceptions: (1) monolithic integration; (2) pluralistic preservation; and (3) pluralistic integration. The speaker examines the main themes of these three models or conceptions, the congruence of each conception with social reality in the past and present, and the compatibility of each model with the principles and practices of education for citizenship in a constitutional democracy. (EH)

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# *E PLURIBUS UNUM*: WHAT DOES IT MEAN? HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND?

**By John J. Patrick**
**Director, Social Studies Development Center;**
**Director, ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education;**
**and Professor of Education, Indiana University, Bloomington**

**The Keynote Address of the 41st Annual Conference of the Michigan Council for the Social Studies at Dearborn, Michigan, February 6, 1997**

SO 028 827

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*E Pluribus Unum*: What Does It Mean? How Should We Respond?[1]

John J. Patrick

Indiana University, Bloomington (August 1, 1997)

Look at the back side of an American one-dollar bill and notice among other symbols the national seal with its motto: *E PLURIBUS UNUM*, the Latin phrase meaning "one out of many." Established in 1782 during the founding of a new nation-state, the United States of America, this national motto reflected an American aspiration for some kind of unity among the thirteen practically sovereign states that waged and won their War of Independence. From the American founding era until the American Civil War, this national motto--*e pluribus unum*--reflected an often strained and fragile relationship among the states of different regions of the American Union and between these states and their federal government. Not until after that fateful conflict some have called "The War Between the States" did there develop a firmly established Union of American states, which indisputably conformed to the ideal of the national motto, *e pluribus unum*, one nation-state out of many states.

By the end of the nineteenth century, as the many American states were consolidating into one American nation, a new vision and impending controversy began to unfold about the meaning of *e pluribus unum*--about national unity and its relationship to ethnic and cultural diversity. By this time, the "*pluribus*" of the national motto was seen by numerous Americans to reflect a new threat to "*unum*"--annual immigration of successive millions of culturally different people. From this time until the present, passionate arguments about unity and diversity and *e pluribus unum* have tended to overlook the original meaning of the national motto while raising slippery new meanings that pertain to personal identity, ethnicity, and culture. So instead of the

relationships of different states (the *pluribus*) to nationhood (the *unum*), considerations of American unity and diversity addressed the relationships of ethnically or culturally different individuals and groups (the new *pluribus*) to an overarching American culture and nationality (the new *unum)*.

During the twentieth century, participants in the national debate about *e pluribus unum* have advanced clashing viewpoints of unity and diversity, which have competed for public favor. This continuing debate can be catalogued and clarified by reference to three "ideal-type" models or conceptions: (1) monolithic integration, (2) pluralistic preservation, and (3) pluralistic integration.[2] This article examines the main themes of these three models or conceptions, the congruence of each conception with social reality in the past and present, and the compatibility of each model with the principles and practices of education for citizenship in a constitutional democracy--the practically undisputed civic mission of American public schools.[3]

**Model 1: Monolithic Integration**

Monolithic integration is the outcome of monocultural assimilation of all manifestations of diversity. Proponents of this conception of *e pluribus unum* would have "one out of many" mean cultural and political unity through radical subordination or even elimination of ethnic and cultural pluralism.

Monolithic integration may involve one-sided socialization, or assimilation, to an Anglo-Saxon ideal that is (or was) presumed to be *the* American heritage. Cultural uniformity through intimidation or coercion , one-way integration into an exclusive society, and Americanization as Anglo-Saxon homogenization are different phrases that describe a single view of how to treat

various ethnic and cultural strains in the United States of America.

Monolithic integration as Anglo-Saxon homogenization was proposed fervently at the beginning of the twentieth century in response to new waves of immigration from the "wrong sides" of Europe--the south and the east. American political and educational leaders feared the "strange ways" of these newcomers and called upon public schools to assimilate them into a national character that was presumed to be fully formed and fixed. Those unwilling or unable to assimilate would be unwelcome and unqualified for first-class citizenship. Early twentieth-century proponents of monolithic integration believed that the immigrants' simple civic responsibility was rapidly to rid themselves of foreign ways and to become Americans, new people in a new world with a single distinctive culture based on Anglo-Saxon and Protestant traits. For example, the prominent sociologist Raymond Mayo-Smith concluded in 1904 that "the great ethnic problem we have before us is to fuse these diverse elements into one common nationality, having one language, one political practice, one patriotism, and one ideal of social development."[4] Professor Mayo-Smith had little doubt that his kind of American unity would emerge inevitably and naturally out of the interaction of culturally inferior immigrants with the compelling qualities of American life.

Unlike Mayo-Smith, others were not so sure of the outcome and raised alarms. For example, Ellwood Cubberley, a prominent early twentieth-century educator, saw public schools as the necessary instrument by which to solve the "great ethnic problem" noted by Raymond Mayo-Smith. According to Professor Cubberley, the public schools would Americanize the culturally different immigrants and thereby transform them into good citizens. He presented his position on Americanization in a popular teacher education textbook,

> These Southern and Eastern Europeans were of a very different type from the North and West Europeans who preceded them. Largely illiterate, docile, often lacking in initiative, and almost wholly without the Anglo-Saxon conceptions of righteousness, liberty, law, order, public decency, and government, their coming has served to dilute tremendously our national stock and to weaken and corrupt our political life. . . . The problem which has faced and still faces the United States is that of assimilating these thousands of foreigners into our national life and citizenship. We must do this or lose our national character.[5]

Echoes of Cubberley's words are heard in the polemical pronouncements of current cultural warriors, such as Patrick Buchanan. They arouse fears of excessive cultural diversity and urge revival of the essential principles and practices of a monocultural America. They often use the "melting pot" to symbolize their yearnings for a unified America that would continue, as presumably it had done in Cubberley's time, to become "one out of many."

The "melting pot" idea, a "throwback" to the early twentieth century, was created by a British author of Jewish identity, Israel Zangwill. He wrote in 1908 a very popular melodrama, *The Melting Pot*, about the glories of life in America--a land in which he never settled but admired from afar for its presumed powers of fusing the diverse cultures of immigrants into an American way of living and being. Zangwill rhapsodized,

> There she lies, the great Melting Pot--listen! Can't you hear the roaring and the bubbling? There gapes her mouth--the harbour where a thousand mammoth feeders come from the ends of the world to pour in their human freight. Ah, what a stirring and seething! Celt and Latin, Slav and Tueton, Greek and Syrian,--black and yellow--Jew and Gentile.
>
> Yes, East and West, and North and South, the palm and the pine, the pole and the equator, the crescent and the cross--how the great Alchemist melts and fuses them with his purging flame! Here shall they all unite to build the Republic of Man and the Kingdom of God.[6]

Zangwill's "melting pot" image has often been associated wrongly with the

Anglo-Saxon hegemonist vision of monolithic unity. However, it was expressed in reaction against the extreme cultural exclusion of the "nativistic" hegemonists, who desired either to transform various foreign types into replications of themselves or, if this seemed improbable, to dismiss these "others" as unworthy of American citizenship. To Zangwill and his associates, by contrast, the "melting pot" was a means of inclusion by which all immigrants, even those whom the Anglo-Saxon hegemonists deemed most objectionable, could become as fully and equally American in culture and citizenship as anyone else. Thus, Zangwill's "melting pot" would bring unity out of diversity by synthesizing and thereby integrating various ethnic strains.

To what extent is the monolithic integration model and its "melting pot" symbol an accurate or desirable conception of *e pluribus unum*?

At best, monolithic integration has represented partial truth. The Anglo-Saxon component of colonial America was only slightly more than half of the total population.[7] By 1850, Anglo-Saxon and various other ethnic elements were significantly blended into the emerging, multi-faceted American way of life. By 1900, the mainstream culture that confronted immigrants was hardly an undiluted Anglo-Saxon civilization, but a spicy mixture derived from various sources.[8]

Nonetheless, the "melting pot" image appealed to many newcomers as an inviting caldron into which multicultured immigrants jumped willingly to emerge as undifferentiated Americans, each one equal in civic status with all other Americans. And for some, it worked. Mary Antin, for instance, wrote lyrically about her family's migration from Tsarist Russia to America. She freely entered the "melting pot" and

believed herself transformed. "I have been made over. I am absolutely other than the person whose story I have to tell," she wrote euphorically.

With words that reflected the hope of educators like Ellwood Cubberley, Mary Antin proclaimed, "The public school has done its best for us foreigners, and for the country, when it has made us into good Americans." Further, she asserted, "My teachers, my schoolmates . . . George Washington himself could not mean more than I when he said 'My country'. . . . And when we stood up [in school] to sing 'America' I shouted the words with all my might. I was in very earnest proclaiming to the world my love for my new found country."[9]

Many immigrants agreed with Mary Antin about both the desirability and possibility of becoming Americans. Many others, however, were less enthusiastic about their American experiences and even bitter about injustices encountered. Some were not permitted to enter the "melting pot" while others turned their backs on it. The awful nineteenth- and early twentieth-century experiences of non-white people from Africa and Asia, for example, contrast sharply and nastily with the joyful affirmations of those like Mary Antin, who coveted acceptance and largely found it.

At its worst, then, the "melting pot" could be a symbol of intimidation and forced transformation into an undesired identity and painful loss of "old world" traditions. Or it could be an icon of rejection, of painful and unfair exclusion from first-class citizenship and equal opportunities.

Rejection was the goal of certain haughty, early twentieth-century guardians of "racial purity" who proclaimed that the "melting pot" was off-limits to certain physical

types who could NOT, they claimed, develop the traits of a good American. Their racist reason for rejecting certain categories of people was genetically based inferiority. These early twentieth-century racists confounded the concepts of race and culture in their erroneous belief that inherited physical characteristics determine behavior--that culture purely is a product of race or genetic inheritance and is not acquired or learned primarily through education and experience. Thus, they concluded--in contradiction of the lessons of modern anthropology--certain racial types could not develop the characteristics needed for responsible democratic citizenship. The epitome of racist, exclusionary thought was expressed in 1916, when Madison Grant published *The Passing of the Great Race*, a best selling book in its time. He posited a racist and deterministic theory of culture that disqualified from the "melting pot" both non-whites and certain types of "inferior white people" such as those of Southern and Eastern European ancestry.[10]

The exclusionary ranting of racists like Grant was radically at odds with the original, turn-of-the-century "melting pot" dream of those like Zangwill, who comprehensively invited all into the "caldron" of Americanization. By mid-century, however, the idea of assimilation was developing in the direction of Zangwill's ideal and beyond it. Louis Adamic, for example, an immigrant writer of Eastern European background, reflected increasing public recognition of an evolving multiethnic America. He perceived his new American heritage as an ongoing, unfinished blending of various heritages and replaced the "melting pot" with a new image, "the multithreaded tapestry." Adamic wrote,

The pattern of America is all of a piece; it is a blend of cultures from

> many lands, woven of threads from many corners of the world. Diversity itself is the pattern, is the stuff and the color of the fabric. Or to put it another way: the United States is a new civilization, owing a great deal to the Anglo-Saxon strain, owing a great deal to the other elements in its heritage and growth, owing much to the unique qualities and strong impetuses which stem from this continent.[11]

Since Adamic's time, the pluralistic facets of American life have become even richer and stronger. In his highly regarded book, *Postwar Immigrant America: A Social History*, Reed Ueda remarked, "The United States became history's first worldwide immigration country in the twentieth century. By the 1990s the flow of newcomers swelled to include people from every region and culture of the globe."[12] So if the monolithic integration model was at best a partially true statement on times past, it is today an untenable guide to social reality in the United States of America.

The monolithic integration model, especially the Anglo-Saxon hegemonist version of it, is flawed in its inaccurate depiction of social reality in the past and present. And it may be incompatible with the principles of American constitutional democracy and authentic education for democratic citizenship. A central tenet of liberal democracy is respect for the worth and dignity of the individual, which requires toleration of differences. In its elitism and exclusion of certain minority groups, unless they divest themselves of particularities through abject merger with the majority, the Anglo-Saxon hegemonist version of monolithic integration is unjustly discriminatory and illiberal. In its excessive emphasis on majoritarian domination, this monocultural unity could threaten the equal rights to civil liberty of minorities and thereby violate the contemporary consensual meaning of democracy. Thus, the Anglo-Saxon hegemonist model of monolithic integration is NOT a desirable guide to education for democratic citizenship. And even the more benign and inclusive monocultural unity suggested

by Zangwill's "melting pot" has since mid-century been severely criticized as an undemocratic infringement upon rights to cultural diversity.

**Model 2: Pluralistic Preservation**

An early and continuous twentieth-century reaction against the "melting pot" image and monolithic integration is the pluralistic preservation model. In this response to the national motto, *e pluribus unum*, multicultural diversity (the *pluribus*) is at least co-equal with civic, political, and cultural unity (the *unum*) and is NOT to be subordinated or eliminated. Many proponents of this model certainly minimize the *unum* side of the equation, while others practically deny it. Diane Ravitch, who identifies herself as a multiculturalist, has blasted the separatist, even ethnocentric, leanings of radical cultural pluralists and referred to their position disparagingly as *e pluribus plures*.[13]

Cultural pluralists in the past and present--both radicals and moderates--have been opposed to the assumption of the "melting pot" that all who come to settle in the United States of American would or could fuse ultimately into one homogeneous American nation. They have opposed both the Anglo-Saxon hegemonist notion of the "melting pot" and the more inclusive idea of Israel Zangwill. In the Anglo-Saxon hegemonist view, the "melting pot" would integrate one-sidely various cultural types into something else, an imitation, more or less, of the Anglo-Saxon Protestant American. By contrast, the Zangwill side of the argument saw the "melting pot" as progressively producing a new American type with a distinctive American culture and nationality that somehow integrated interchangeably all the elements, including the Anglo-Saxon, so that everyone, not just the culturally different immigrants, eventually would become

something other than their ancestors had been.

Horace M. Kallen, a precursor of current multiculturalist thought, was the most influential and articulate of the early twentieth-century opponents of all visions of the "melting pot" and its product, monocultural unity. He urged preservation of "cultural pluralism" and viewed America as a federation of cultures, a democratic political unit (the *unum*) composed of unmeltable ethnics (the *pluribus*). In 1915, Kallen wrote,

> [T]he outlines of a great and truly democratic commonwealth become discernible. Its form is that of the Federal republic; its substance a democracy of nationalities, co-operating voluntarily and autonomously in the enterprise of self-realization through the perfection of men according to their kind. . . . The common life of the commonwealth [the *unum*] is . . . the foundation and background for the realization of the distinctive individuality of each *nation* that composes it [the *pluribus*]. . . . Thus "American civilization" may come to mean . . . a multiplicity in a unity, an orchestration of mankind."[14]

Kallen wanted to promote and preserve group differences, not try to melt them into something else. He believed that ancestry is destiny; that one's genetic inheritance determines one's fundamental behavioral characteristics or culture. He asserted, "An Irishman is always an Irishman, a Jew always a Jew."[15] So Kallen ironically seemed to agree with people he otherwise despised--the racist and chauvinistic proponents of a purely Anglo-Saxon America, such as Madison Grant. Like them Kallen believed that certain human differences were immutable and that all human beings are NOT fundamentally alike and potentially transformable in their ethnic identities and cultures. Thus, basic human differences could not dissolve in any "melting pot."[16]

According to historian David A. Hollinger, Horace Kallen's doctrine "of enduring ethno-racial groups located him at the protoseparatist extreme of cultural pluralism." Thus, Kallen portended key ideas of late twentieth-century multicultural thinkers who rigidly emphasize the

autonomy and rights of racial or ethnic groups within the United States of America.[17] This extreme pluralism, in its celebration of ethnic and racial particularism and cultural determinism, certainly is ethnocentric and may unwittingly degenerate into racism. Further, it seems to equate democracy with fulfillment of ethnic group privileges and rights rather than with the traditional American liberal ideal of security for individual rights in tandem with majority rule.

Some current advocates of multicultural preservation recognize and criticize deterministic and ethnocentric thinking among colleagues. Walter Parker, for example, warns that the "identity politics that inevitably comes with pluralism" sometimes brings about "a new politics of excessive group-interest" that is inimical to authentic democracy. He also argues against conceptions of multiculturalism "that would make group identity into something natural, etched in primordial stone. Not only are ethnic identities not inborn," Parker notes, "they are circumstantial and even voluntary to some extent."[18] These are worthy criticisms and warnings by an advocate of multicultural pluralism and unity against unworthy ideas of some colleagues.

Parker emphasizes his particular conception of cultural pluralism and unity in response to debates about what *e pluribus unum* should mean. To him, this motto "means the political one alongside the cultural many" rather than some type of cultural diversity within an overriding civic and political unity.[19] In this formulation, at least, Parker seems to concur with a central tenet of multicultural democracy--a "throwback" to Horace Kallen's conception of a federation of separate and unyielding ethnic or cultural groups--a civic and political unity in concert with but somehow apart from the many perpetually distinct and autonomous cultural groups that constitute the polity. To Parker, this interpretation of *e pluribus unum* represents "advanced ideas about democracy," which require commitment to some type of protected and preserved

autonomy for many separate ethnic and cultural groups within the United States of America and subordination of an overarching American national identity and culture to the primacy of multicultural identities.[20]

Parker's "advanced ideas" appear to promote multicultural democracy with its stress on group rights. He also recognizes the importance of traditional individual rights at the core of liberal democracy. But can these two types of rights easily coexist? In inevitable cases of conflict between them, would group rights tend to trump individual rights and thereby raise multicultural democracy above liberal democracy? If so, the freedom of persons to choose or shape their destinies would be diminished in favor of group-based ancestral identities treated as if they were immutable or "etched in stone."

At best, the pluralistic preservation model emphasizes the ethnic and cultural diversity that has been part of every period in American history. And it implies the need for toleration and respect of individual and group differences and recognition of multiple interests and aspirations among various people in America.

This model, however, is not generally an accurate representation of social reality of America's past or present. For example, in 1972 the U.S. Bureau of the Census conducted a national survey of ethnic origins. About 40 percent of the white respondents would not identify with a particular ethnic group. The reason was that their ancestry was too mixed and/or remote from "old world" antecedents to sustain any sense of ethnic or national identity other than identification with the United States of America.[21] If pressed to find their "roots" millions of Americans would discover *three or more* ethnic strains in their ancestry. Such mixtures add up to identification only as an "American." Krug has estimated that there are "over 150 million

people in America who have no particular ethnic affiliation."[22]

According to Thomas Sowell, intermarriages of people from different ethnic and racial groups have been contributing significantly to the blurring of distinctions. He reports: "More than half of all marriages among Americans of German, Irish, British, or Polish ancestry are with people of different ethnicity, and Italian and Japanese Americans are not far behind."[23] Further, sociologist Morris Janowitz points out that the overwhelming majority of American immigrants "came as settlers" to start a new life in a new culture; they did not come as colonizers to perpetuate "old world cultures" in the United States of America.[24]

David Hollinger reports in *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism* that late twentieth-century trends on interethnic and interracial marriages have continued to blur and break down group differences in favor of a more unified American identity.[25] Further, Richard Alba's current inquiries on ethnic identity among white Americans reveal that many persons of this category "claim no identity other than the American one."[26]

Another flaw of the pluralistic preservation model is the idea of a federation of many cultures. This vision is more congruent with social reality in India, Russia, South Africa, or Nigeria than the United States of America. Both India and Nigeria, for example, are much more multicultural than the United States of America by such criteria as the number and variety of extensively and enduringly used primary languages and long-standing, territorially based ethnic identities. Both the federal republics of India and Russia, furthermore, are federations of distinct national or cultural groups, which occupy distinct territories that historically have been their own. Some multiculturalists might wish to reconstruct the United States of America into a federation of many cultures or nations, but this country neither is nor has been such a

multicultural or multinational federation, as Yugoslavia was before it disintegrated.

A final and perhaps fatal flaw of the pluralistic preservation model is its culturally deterministic tendencies, noted by Parker, which violate the basic liberal traditions of America. The individual's right to liberty has been an overarching principle and aspiration of most Americans from the founding of the republic until today. This right to liberty includes the freedom to choose, within broad natural limits, who one is or might become. Any conception of personal or group identity in the United States of America that threatens this basic liberty opposes deeply rooted civic traditions and public opinions that favor fluidity and free choice against any kind of cultural determinism or coercion.

This sentiment against an illiberal cultural determinism is expressed emphatically by political scientist Jean Bethke Elshtain, "My democratic dream was nurtured by a presumption that none of us is stuck inside our own skins; our identities and ideas are not reducible to our membership in a race, or ethnic group, or a sex. . . . [E]ducation is about opening the world up, not imprisoning us in terms of race, gender, or ethnicity."[27]

Given the weaknesses of the pluralistic preservation model, especially its tendencies toward determinism and against individual freedom, it is NOT an adequate guide to education for democratic citizenship in the United States of America. There is, however, a third model, pluralistic integration, which seems to incorporate the best elements of the other two and thereby to be the best guide to what cultural diversity and unity should mean for American citizenship and education for democracy.

**Model 3: Pluralistic Integration**

The debate between advocates of monolithic integration and pluralistic preservation has been about whether to stress the many or the one in response to our national motto, *e pluribus unum*. The clashing claims of extreme integrationists and pluralists seem to pose a radical choice: Should American society be either culturally uniform or diverse? The monolithic integrationist wants to submerge ethnic group boundaries, and the extreme pluralist wants to accentuate them to undermine cultural unity. However, one might distill the best elements of the two polar positions to form a paradoxical alternative, *pluralistic integration*.[28] This model, constructed by social historian John Higham, assumes both the fundamental compatibilities and continuing tensions of civic and national unity with social and cultural diversity.

Higham's model stresses consensus about core civic principles and values, rooted in the evolving American constitutional order, which include toleration of and respect for the rights of individuals and ethnic minority groups. Pluralistic integration also denotes both support for majority rule and civic responsibilities for the commonwealth, which include concern for the well being of various minority groups of the society, including multicultural minorities. However, pluralistic integration rejects the deterministic and illiberal tendencies of those who favor multicultural democracy and group rights over the rights of individuals freely to decide basic questions about themselves and their social affiliations.

John Higham brilliantly summarizes key terms of his paradoxical conception of pluralistic integration,

> In contrast to the integrationist model, it will not eliminate ethnic boundaries. But neither will it maintain them intact. It will uphold the validity of a common culture to which all individuals have access, while sustaining the

> efforts of minorities to preserve and enhance their own integrity. . . . Both integration and ethnic cohesion are recognized as worthy goals, which different individuals will accept in different degrees.[29]

Neither monolithic integration nor pluralistic preservation is as congruent with social reality in the United States as pluralistic integration. There has been too much multifaceted and reciprocal "melting of the ethnics" to give much credibility to either one-sided Americanization or to extreme pluralistic preservation. Although the Northern and Western European components of the American heritage (especially the Anglo-Saxon strain) have been very significant, the United States of America neither was, nor is, an exclusively Anglo-Saxon civilization. If American society is not homogeneous, it also neither was, nor is, an epitome of multiculturalism--as the Soviet Union was and India is.

The pluralistic integration model recognizes the social complexity of a society in which ethnicity and culture may vary significantly from one group to another and from one person to another, and in which the majority is sufficiently mixed in ancestry as to blur or dilute "old world" national identities and "new world" attachments to minority ethnic groups. Only a small proportion of citizens of the United States of America has primary and abiding loyalty to a minority ethnic group and culture.

Many citizens of the United States of America, despite the efforts of ethnic and cultural separatists in their midst, primarily see themselves as Americans and only secondarily, if at all, as something else. In this American identity, however, most reject as antiquated or even unfair the one-sided Americanization of Anglo-Saxon hegémonists. Rather, they tend to view the evolving and ever-changing American culture and national identity as the product of no particular ethnic strain, but the property of all those various types that have created it.

The social historian Reed Ueda concludes, "A world melting pot is forming in the United States in which the question 'whose identity and culture?' is increasingly irrelevant."[30] But John Higham cautions, "America is more than a federation of minorities. It encompasses many millions who will never conceive of themselves in those terms. Americans are a people molded by processes of assimilation. An adequate theory of American culture will have to address the reality of assimilation as well as the persistence of differences."[31] Higham's model, pluralistic integration, is such an "adequate theory." It honestly treats cultural pluralism in concert with the reality that many (maybe most) people in the United States of America freely choose to identify themselves as Americans in candid recognition of the "melted" or fused components of their multicultural ancestries.

Of the three conceptions discussed in this paper, pluralistic integration is the one more congruent with social reality in the United States and more compatible with the principles of education for citizenship in a democracy. The first conception, in its Anglo-Saxon hegemonistic form, is elitist and unjustly discriminatory in its exclusion of certain minority groups from full enjoyment of civil rights and opportunities, unless they divest themselves of particularities through merger with the majority. The extreme pluralist view, though claiming affinity with democracy, is antithetical to majoritarianism and cosmopolitanism in its excessive and ethnocentric celebration of minority group rights and interests. Further, in its tendencies toward cultural determinism, the pluralistic preservation model may become an illiberal obstacle to an individual's choice to decide freely, within broad boundaries, one's identity and destiny. And in their propensity to confound the constructs of race and culture, extreme pluralists inadvertently may encourage racism. John Higham warns, "Multiculturalists in general see group identities as

fixed, and in that way they can resemble racists."[32] By contrast, pluralistic integration fully embodies majority rule with minority rights, especially the right to individual liberty, and thereby is most compatible with liberal democracy and the American civic tradition.

Pluralistic integration, unlike the alternative models of diversity and unity, has a justifiable claim on the curriculum of schools because it is more congruent with social reality and more compatible with the best aspects of the American civic tradition. Thus, the paradoxical conception of pluralistic integration is an appropriate and challenging guide to education for democratic citizenship.

**Conclusion**

From the 1770s to the 1990s, Americans have been concerned and sometimes confounded about cultural and national identities and the civic commitments that they entail. According to the historian Lawrence Cremin, "Two hundred years after they had made their Revolution, Americans were still in the process of defining what it meant to be an American and hence what they were prepared to teach themselves and their children."[33] In this controversial quest, Americans continue to argue about the proper emphasis on unity and diversity, *unum* and *pluribus*, in their educational institutions, especially primary and secondary schools.

Those who conduct the debate in terms of the pluralistic integration model eschew inflexible, either-or responses. They recognize that the key question is not whether one side or the other--pluralism or integration--should prevail, but what the balance between them should be, and to what end, and in light of what circumstances. To accept the challenge of this question is to direct the debate about *e pluribus unum* away from polemicism and dogmatism and toward

pragmatism and realism. Among the strengths of pluralistic integration is that it represents a fluid middle way in response to the complexities, ambiguities, and polarities of an American social and political dilemma. A balanced, moderate, and flexible position, in crisp contrast to rigid radical extremism, usually is the prevailing position in an American public controversy.

Lately, Americans occupying various places in the political spectrum--from the left to the right side of the prevailing center--have been calling more and more strongly for a restoration of balance in the continuing debate about how much to stress the many or the one in response to *e pluribus unum*. For example, Todd Gitlin, a long-standing partisan of the left, recently has castigated multicultural separatists in a stirring statement about the need to reemphasize unity, "For too long, too many Americans have busied themselves digging trenches to fortify their cultural borders," wrote Gitlin in his best-selling work, *The Twilight of Common Dreams*. "Enough bunkers! "Enough of the perfection of difference!" he exclaimed. "We ought to be building bridges."[34]

President Clinton seems to concur with Gitlin and others of the partisan left and right who see the need to bring the American *unum* into balance with a recently rampant *pluribus*. In his Second Inaugural Address, the President prompted the citizenry to respond to our historic challenge posed by *e pluribus unum*. "The challenge of our past remains the challenge of our future. Will we be one nation, one people, with one common destiny--or not? Will we all come together, or come apart?"[35] The future of our American republic will turn on how well we respond as responsible citizens and civic educators to this ongoing paradoxical problem of how simultaneously and harmoniously to accommodate the one and the many.

**Notes**

1. This paper is based on the keynote address by John J. Patrick to the 1997 Annual State Social Studies Conference of the Michigan Council for the Social Studies at Dearborn, Michigan, 6 February 1997. Key ideas and a few paragraphs of this article are derived from John J. Patrick, "Immigration in the Curriculum." *Social Education* 50 (March 1986): 172-176.

2. These "ideal-types" are rough and unqualified conceptions, which are useful points of reference for comparative analyses and judgments of phenomena. Viewpoints of various groups or individuals might be gauged as more or less congruent with these conceptions or traditions.

3. R. Freeman Butts, *The Civic Mission in Education Reform* (Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press, 1989). Butts argues compellingly that education for democratic citizenship has been a time-honored and nearly consensual goal of American schools.

4. Richard Mayo-Smith, *Emigration and Immigration: A Study in Social Science* (New York, 1904), 78.

5. Ellwood P. Cubberley, *Public Education in the United States* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934), 485-486.

6. Israel Zangwill, *The Melting Pot* (New York: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909), 198.

7. Arthur M. Schlesinger, *The Birth of the Nation: A Portrait of the American People on the Eve of Independence* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968), 10-11.

8. Mark M. Krug, *The Melting of the Ethnics: Education of the Immigrants, 1880-1914* (Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa, 1976), 95-104.

9. Mary Antin, *The Promised Land* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1911), xix, 225-226.

10. John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1866-1925* (New York: Atheneum, 1963), 155-157. Higham discusses the racist ideas of Madison Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race* and criticizes Grant's confounding of the ideas of race and culture, which contradicts the prevailing theories and empirical findings of social scientists about culture. To confound the concept of race and culture, as Grant does, is to epitomize racism and racist beliefs.

11. Louis Adamic, *A Nation of Nations* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), 6.

12. Reed Ueda, *Postwar Immigrant America: A Social History* (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1994), 1.

13. Diane Ravitch, "Multiculturalism: E Pluribus Plures," in *Debating P.C.: The Controversy Over Political Correctness on College Campuses,* edited by Paul Berman. (New York: Dell Publishing), 271-298.

14. Horace M. Kallen, "Democracy Versus the Melting Pot," *The Nation* 100 (February 18-25, 1915), 219. In addition, see Kallen's *Culture and Democracy in the United States*, published in 1924.

15. This statement is quoted in John Higham, *Send These to Me: Immigrants in Urban America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 206.

16. Like Kallen, some current American multiculturalists reify and confound the constructs of race and culture in their facile use of terms like black culture and white culture. Thus, they contradict consensual conclusions of twentieth-century social science. For example, see Bernard Berelson and Gary A. Steiner, *Human Behavior: An Inventory of Scientific Findings* (Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1964), 648, "Culture is NOT directly associated with race: men of

different biological stocks participate in the same culture, men of the same biological stock have different cultures."

17. David A. Hollinger, *Postethnic America: Beyond Multiculturalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 93.

18. Walter C. Parker, "'Advanced' Ideas About Democracy: Toward a Pluralist Conception of Citizen Education," *Teachers College Record* 98 (Fall 1996), 119.

19. *Ibid*, 121.

20. *Ibid*, 105-125.

21. U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Characteristics of the Population by Ethnic Origin: March 1972," *Current Population Reports* P-20, No. 249, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), 11.

22. Mark M. Krug, 103.

23. Thomas Sowell, *Ethnic America* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 286-287.

24. Morris Janowitz, *The Reconstruction of Patriotism: Education for Civic Consciousness* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 130-131.

25. David A. Hollinger, 166.

26. Richard D. Alba, *Ethnic Identity: The Transformation of White America* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1990), 315.

27. Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Democracy On Trial* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 85-86.

28. John Higham, *Send These To Me: Immigrants in Urban America*, 198-248.

29. *Ibid*, 244.

30. Reed Ueda, 153.

31. John Higham, "Multiculturalism and Universalism," *American Quarterly* 45 (June 1993), 209.

32. Sheldon Hackney, "A Conversation With John Higham," *Humanities* 15 (January/February 1994).

33. Lawrence a. Cremin, *American Education: The Metropolitan Experience, 1876-1980* (New York: Harper & Row, 1988), 14.

34. Todd Gitlin, *The Twilight of Common Dreams: Why America Is Wracked by Culture Wars* (New York: Henry Holt, 1995, 237.

35. William Clinton, "Text of President Clinton's Second Inaugural Address to the Nation," *New York Times*, January 21, 1997.